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"Their round completed . . . the milkmen began . . . to retrace the long uphill journey from the city's outskirts to the village." See page 5.

361



"... in front of Bai Penko's tavern on the northern side of Renaissance Square." See page 8.

[Facing p. 4]

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"The priest could look past the modern school building . . . to the church just beyond." Sofia is in the background. See page 8.

● 463



"Yurdan, the leading tailor . . . and his wife Zdravka were a unique couple." See page 14.

[Facing p. 5]

THE PEOPLE AND THEIR VILLAGE

5

out of hand. The fact that not all patrons of the tavern drank liquor was shown by the comment of one of the villagers:

"I come to the tavern chiefly for the newspaper. I have a strong will, drink little, and know when to stop. The young men when starting the temperance association asked me to be president but I couldn't give up coming here for the newspaper. The small coffee house across the square has only room enough for five or six people and there's no point in going there. Many blame me for going to the tavern, but they have no interest in finding out what is going on in the world."

One advantage of visiting the tavern included the announcements that the town crier always made there as well as out in the square.

The tavern keepers, however, had no illusions about their standing in the public estimation. All of them were of the same peasant stock as their patrons, but had sold some of their land in order to set themselves up in business.

"If the people of the village took a vote, the majority would favor shutting up all the taverns. The people don't like us," was the tart comment of one tavern keeper. This dislike sprang from the indebtedness of so many people to the tavern keepers, as well as from the strong feeling many have toward the social consequences of excessive alcoholism.

There were, however, a number of men who had to miss the morning session at the Dragalevtsy *kruchmi*. They were the milkmen. Each morning while it was still dark eight tiny donkeys left their yards, pattered down the slope just outside the village, and followed the straight gravel road five miles to Sofia. They were accompanied by their prodding masters who kept an eye on the two or three large cans of milk which had been strapped onto the wooden saddles. These donkeys long ago learned to swallow any pride they might have had, for each morning, with monotonous regularity, they were overtaken by the high two-wheeled horse-drawn milk carts used by the remaining thirty Dragalevtsy milkmen. Once in Sofia, the majority of the milkmen covered their routes, knocking at the doors of the regular customers and waiting patiently for a container into which to pour a quart or so of milk from the large cans. The round completed, most of the milkmen began at once to retrace the long uphill journey from the city outskirts to the village.

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463 ●

463
[231]

THE PEOPLE AND THEIR VILLAGE

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travelers, dressed in their brightest, newest garments, were speeded on their way. The friends and relatives loaded them with money and presents of clothing, food, and wool, which the pilgrims were to donate to the great and holy monastery. The whole ceremony of leave-taking was made a part of the bright landscape by the flowers everywhere—on the dress of the pilgrims, fastened to the gifts, and carried in huge bunches. Upon their return a few days later the dusty pilgrims were met at the outskirts of the village and escorted home through the blue twilight by those eager to hear of every adventure during the days and nights in the great mountains, whose jagged walls have protected Rila Monastery for hundreds of years.

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Formal piety, as shown in pilgrimages, was only one of the major characteristics which these Bulgarian villagers possessed. The Dragalevtsy people, especially the men, were predominantly literate. Bulgaria, despite what seems a forbidding Cyrillic alphabet, has the highest rate of literacy of all Balkan countries, a fact which can be attributed to the tendency to regard education as a panacea for individual and social ills. While only 44 per cent of the women over fifteen years of age could read and write, 92 per cent of the men were literate. Of course, I often came upon groups of peasants crowded around a friend slowly spelling out a newspaper article aloud, but these little clusters of attentive listeners originated because of the scarcity of newspaper subscribers, not necessarily because of illiteracy.

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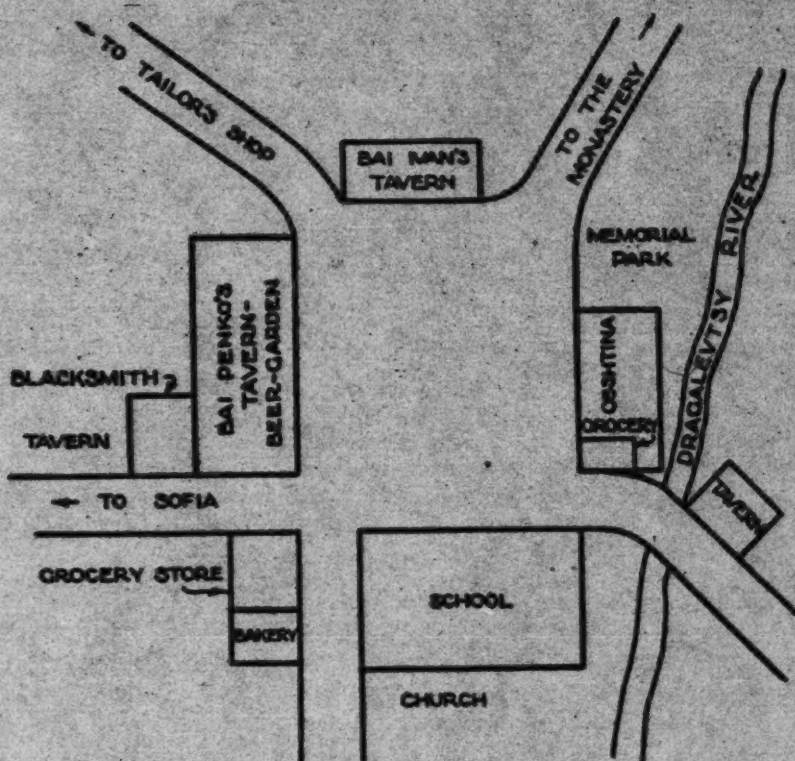
The Dragalevtsy people were also law-abiding. During the first three years I knew the village, and informants said that the record went much farther back than that, no Dragalevtsy peasant had been taken to Sofia for imprisonment. There was no local jail, nor any need for one. This was not a sign of the inefficiency of local police, but rather an indication of the peaceable and honest traits of the people.

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In many other characteristics the villagers shared what have come to be known as the universal "rural virtues," for theirs was an agrarian way of life. More than three-fourths of the family heads were peasant proprietors. In addition to these, there were two other occupational groups: the intellectuals and the artisans. Despite their small number, the intelligentsia, as they were called by the peasants, were the most influential group in the community. Whenever the

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Renaissance Square, the focal point of Dragalevtzy's communal life

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weather was agreeable I was sure to find several of them playing cards in front of Bai Penko's tavern on the northern side of Renaissance Square, where the winter *boro* was held. Even though they sat engrossed in their game, they could still keep an eye on what was happening in the village, since this square was the focal point of community life. The mayor, for instance, could watch the Obshtina, or municipal building, across the square, as well as all traffic that entered this rocky plot of ground on its way to the city of Sofia below or to the monastery higher up Mount Vitosha. The priest could look past the modern school building, flanking the western side of the square, to the church just beyond. The village doctor's husband was near in

THE PEOPLE AND THEIR VILLAGE

9

case his wife needed him, although he invariably grumbled in his native Russian upon being called away from the game. A fourth hand during the summer was a reserve army officer whose intense love for German efficiency and ideology and whose contempt for the "ignorant, unreliable peasant" became bywords in the community. Peasants sitting on the porch of Bai Ivan's tavern on the eastern side of the square could observe with seeming indifference the intelligentsia at play, distracted though they were at times by the fervent temperance lectures delivered by the tavern keeper's daughter-in-law whenever she placed a glass of *rakiya* in front of a customer.

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These intelligentsia proved to be interesting people. The mayor had a good education, completed by the study of law in Russia. His father had been a priest in Boyana, a village just four miles to the west, so the mayor, himself a *Shop*, knew the workings of the peasant mind. When he was sent to the village as mayor back in 1934, after the *coup d'état* of that year abolished all elections and deprived many local officials of their jobs, he issued a flowery proclamation which contained such thoughts as these:

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Therefore, as I take up my duties, desiring greatly to use the small abilities that I possess for the economic and cultural uplift of the villages included in the commune entrusted to my care, I wish to express my good feelings of loyalty and friendliness and attachment to the population and to certify that I am ready to work for the uplift of our commune and to be the loyal conveyor of its economic and cultural interests and needs.

Imbued with the idea that we are all members of the same family, sons of mother Bulgaria, let us forget the recent past of shameful partisan struggles and begin to live as genuine brothers—Bulgarians filled with mutual love, patience, harmony, respect, and good will.

Let us do our duty to these beautifully situated villages, perched on the slope of Mount Vitosha, and make them attractive gardens, with culture, and places of merriment and songs.

The people soon learned that the mayor when excited talked so rapidly that he failed to enunciate clearly, and they always enjoyed mimicking this mannerism. They did not particularly resent his management of their affairs, despite the fact that he had been sent by the central government which gave local communes no choice in

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The artisans, though few in number, comprised a third occupational group. Just because their knowledge and special skill raised them above the ordinary peasant, these artisans in no sense of the word walked in the rarified atmosphere of the intelligentsia. In 1937 the people of Dragalevtsy supported one blacksmith, one full-time and two part-time tailors, a cobbler, and a barber. Of course, the six or seven Dragalevtsy men who went to Sofia every day to ply a skilled trade were enumerated in the census but had little connection with the economy of the village. The few tradesmen were identified more with the agricultural group than with the artisans.

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One of the most picturesque characters in the village was Iliya, the smith. Dark-complexioned, sturdy of frame, with his stolid face weighed down by enormous mustaches, he was far too forbidding in countenance to attract the village children to his small establishment behind Bai Penko's tavern. In fact, customers often had to look for him in the tavern, where he consumed record-breaking quantities of liquor. In his sober moods he and his two apprentices occasionally worked fourteen hours at a stretch to finish up some much-needed job. The three of them combined wagon-repairing with blacksmithing, working at the lathe almost as frequently as at the anvil. However, frequent preoccupation with hinges, wagon bolts, horseshoes, plowshares, and wheel rims gave Iliya a fair claim to being a *kovach*, or smith. So did his master smith's certificate hanging on the wall.

[586]
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Yurdan, the leading tailor, was another artisan. He and his wife Zdravka were a unique couple in that they were the only Dragalevtsy people to become involved in divorce proceedings within recent years. To be sure, Zdravka withdrew her petition for divorce soon after it reached the high church court, which, rather than civil bodies, then decided upon all matters pertaining to marriage. Yurdan had a small but well equipped workroom attached to his trim little house. Although Dragalevtsy-born, he worked for twelve years in Sofia as an apprentice and *maistor*, later becoming the first tailor to set up business in Dragalevtsy.

I often went to converse with Yurdan and Zdravka, for I found them both loquacious and inclined to be objective in their views of village life. I questioned them in particular about the peasant costumes, which always seemed picturesque to me a foreigner. It was Zdravka who told me how the women made their garments.

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"Since the World War there has been much change. Men stopped wearing their narrow white trousers which belted below the hips because they saw during the war that pants that belted above the hips were better. The women changed to lighter clothes because a woman from Vladaya [another village] came with others to visit here, married a Dragalevtsy man, and settled here. Other women saw that the clothes she wore were more convenient and began to adopt the new style."

The tailor's customers brought their own cloth. Five or six of the more fashion-minded young women brought dresses from other villages to be copied. A girl before marriage accumulated about twenty black *sukmani* (jumper dresses), all of the same pattern. She wore out about three of these a year. The men had one black and one rough everyday suit.

Much of the cloth was dyed at home by the peasants with the use of commercial dyes. Black was the universal color for men except in the case of the old style white trousers. If any man deviated from this fashion, people said mockingly, "You are a gypsy," thereby reminding him that he had better act like other people or run the risk of additional social disapproval.

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Shoes in Bulgaria were definitely a sign of social rank. *Tsarvulin* or "sandal-wearer," once a common term for farmer or peasant, has been somewhat displaced by *selenin* or "villager." As a matter of fact, most men in Dragalevtsy continued to wear the pigskin sandals, whereas all self-respecting village women possessed a pair of cheap western shoes. Comically enough, they frequently walked barefoot and carried these uncomfortable badges of status. Just the same, these shoes periodically needed the services of a cobbler, who in Dragalevtsy happened to be the youngest married son of Bai Milush, a highly respected peasant proprietor. Three sons, their wives and progeny comprised part of the twenty people living in Bai Milush's patriarchal dwelling. As the land which will someday be divided up among the sons was limited, each son agreed to specialize along some particular line: the oldest was the dairyman, the middle son was the crop expert, and the youngest married son (and, incidentally, the most delicate in health) was a cobbler, whom the family agreed to send to a trade school in Sofia. Because he drove in his wooden pags with the best of them, he was building up a profitable business in the village.

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"Most of the people prefer to be in the tavern, though there are some who go there to do *pazarluk* [arrange a business deal], drink a little, then leave to do their work again."

"I prefer to work in the fields than to sit in the tavern."

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Why do young people want to become artisans and do not want to become farmers?

"They want easier work. Field work is heavy. If they work inside, they will live longer, the wind won't beat in their faces, they won't remain in the cold."

"It's better to work inside than out in the weather."

"If one is an artisan, one won't become hungry. There will always be work to do. But in the fields things are not so sure. Work is easier as an artisan than as a farmer. The money is only of minor importance."

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Do people of Dragalevtsy, like the heroes of old folk songs, love hard work more than easy work?

"They prefer easy work. Fifty years ago people liked the harder work, for there were few occupations. Now parents don't control their children. A son sees his father at one tavern and he goes to the other. If his father comes to the second tavern, then he goes back to the first. Formerly people had big fields and had to do much work. They prided themselves on the amount of work they could get done. They were healthier, because they didn't smoke and drink so much. The one who could work the most was the most honored. Now the fields are small. There is little work to do in them, and so people get out of the habit of working hard."

"They like easier work now. Everyone looks for something that is light. It was not so fifty years ago, but the change came about especially since the war."

"They love easy work. Formerly there were more animals, more fields, less people, and therefore more work."

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With what adjective would a Dragalevtsy peasant prefer to be described: industrious, rich, influential, wise?

THE GOOD OLD DAYS

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551 would take the larger family name of his father's kinship group. Thus
 178 an outsider could immediately place each child not only in the family
 594 group as a whole but in the small conjugal group as well. Students
 of child development have often pointed out the advantage to the child
 of growing up with a number of intimate contemporaries, as well as
 having several adults ready to serve as substitute parents whenever
 occasion demands.

But the change need not be viewed as entirely unfavorable. The
 smaller family unit was bringing about a more intimate relationship
 between members, breaking down the formalism between parents and
 children, and encouraging democratic living.

178 The good old days, if we are to believe the elders of the village,
 463 differed not only in the degree of governmental autonomy in com-
 munity affairs and a patriarchy in which the young respected the old:
 occupations too were of a different order.

"Half a century ago there were very few educated people, the
 chief of these being a priest from the monastery and a teacher. The
 mayor was an ordinary peasant elected by the town council of twelve
 people. There was a swineherd, as well as other herdsmen, and five
 merchants, plus a tanner. Practically all of the people were farmers.
 There was no dairyman; there was no doctor. All dentistry was done
 by Turks who remedied an aching tooth by pulling it out. We raised
 no horses, and an itinerant gypsy smith did all the necessary iron
 work."

When I asked another man about occupations half a century ago,
 he added this information:

652 "It was 'simple business' fifty years ago. There was a teacher
 211 for boys in the first and second grades; there was no village tailor, and
 the single tanner had little work. A priest from the monastery min-
 istered to the people on occasion. We had no tax collector and an
 illiterate mayor took all the taxes and kept the account on a *rabosh*."

(Here I steered the conversation off the subject of occupations
 long enough to find out what the *rabosh* was. It was similar to a
 practice of the Exchequer in twelfth-century England in which ac-
 counting was done with pieces of notched wood. Each family had
 a small piece of wood fitting into another piece kept by the mayor.
*The notches in the wood told the financial status of the
 family as far as the tax money was concerned.*)

000 The notches in the wood told the financial status of the family as far as the tax money was concerned.)

178 "There was no barber because shaving and haircutting were done
 • 463 in the home or else by neighbors. When we began to use iron in the wagons, *maistori* came from outside. They also began to help in the building of simple houses. Until their arrival the houses were of straw with no bricks or tiles."

Even half a century ago there were a few young people who wanted to give up agriculture and become artisans, chiefly because there was not enough farm work for all members of the family. But the real shift in the young people's attitude toward farming as an occupation occurred in the 1920's along with the increased importance of the school.

"Formerly we were simple people," my informant concluded. "Now the situation is very different. Many go to study, to be officers and to be priests. Many finish the fifth and sixth class in Sofia. Now young people with ambition can be what they want to be."

One old woman in comparing the present with the period of her childhood said:

"The school is largely responsible for the change. Dragalevtsy would have been the same now as it was fifty years ago if we had had no school. The young people read and write, the discipline is more severe, and the youngsters have to go to school."

Whenever I wanted to stir up a lively discussion at the tavern, or with a group of women spinning thread, or with farmers out in the field, I could rely upon one question to do the trick: "Was life better fifty years ago than it is today?" The oldest person usually led off; after that, the discussion became a verbal free-for-all. Nothing was ever proved to anyone's satisfaction, but it was readily apparent that changes had taken place. The good old days in the opinion of some stood for the best that life had to offer, but others were glad that conditions of half a century ago belonged to the past. Perhaps the village drunk spoke words of wisdom when he finally got the attention of the group long enough to say: "Everything is better now but it is also more difficult." The more I think over that statement the more I feel that the drunk should have been a diplomat.

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1. Hair dress of young women, with tresses decorated with silver. 2. and 3. Decorative pendants. 4. Head ornament of the brides, made of flowers and silver coins. 5. Woman wearing an embroidered blouse and a woven carpet apron. 6. Drawing well. 7. Neck ornament. 8. Hand mill for salt. 9. Threshing sled. 10. Cave dwelling on the Lon. 11. Fire saw. 12. Village street. 13. Shelter of the field herders. 14. Household altar. 15. Rattle board of wood, from a monastery. 16. Signalling horn of a country mailman. 17. Sawing frame¹/_A

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At the time of the Romans present-day Bulgaria was called Moesia in its northern (Danube) region, Thracia in its southern section, and it was inhabited by an Indo-European people of North European extraction, at the time when old Greek, and later Roman and Byzantine, immigrants moved there and intermingled with it. From the sixth century on, the Slavic wave moved closer, and from the seventh century onwards Finnish Turko-Tataric migrant herders and horse breeders repeatedly found their way into this country from the middle Volga.

- 463 From these the Bulgarians adopted and kept the herding system, by the side of which the Thracian and Slavic agriculture was maintained. The Ottoman Turks coming from the southeast provided the country
- 181 with its class of craftsmen and tradesmen. This mosaic of races and peoples developed a particularly powerful and healthy stock of people whose high life expectancy is well known, as well as a temperate,
- 531 industrious, and sober character. It mirrors a corresponding multiplicity
- 177 of cultures; thus we have in art types that range from the Scythian style and its predilection for phantastic animal forms to the Byzantine and ancient Oriental motifs; from the cellular stone inlays of the period of the Teutonic migrations (belt clasps) to the Tatar decorative pendants (Figures 2, 3, and 7),¹/_A and from the Slavic joy in ornamentation and
- 592 colors to the Turkish, recent Near Eastern household industries. The Slavic household community, which takes up every new generation into the fabric of the family, has as its consequence the form of settlement
- 342 by individual and separate farmsteads. Aside from occasional underground dwelling pits in the loess, of which only the pointed roof of rushes rises above the ground, there are one-story high, rectangular panel-work houses covered with loam, placed either on a level with the soil, or else on top of a wooden substructure for the working sheds

¹[For illustrations, see 1: Karutz, E1 Europe, cat. 116, p. 59a--Analyst]
²[See 1: Karutz, E1 Europe, cat. 116, p. 59a--Analyst]

vader's country⁽¹⁾ and they were obliged not only to cultivate the land on behalf of their owners, but also to carry out all other work and naturally to build permanent houses which were necessary, since Bulgars were to establish themselves for good in these newly conquered districts.

For a long time Bulgars had either the disposition nor the sense to learning arts and crafts. Even where they had abandoned their incursions and lootings and were giving themselves to peaceful occupations, as agriculture and stock-breeding, they did not take to the arts. The palaces and the churches of Bulgaria have been built by foreigners, especially by Greeks, such as the beautiful palace of Aboba near Schumen, which is a monument of Byzantine style of the 9th or 10th century⁽²⁾. But even later, after the 15th century, when Bulgaria, accord-

1) The Bulgarian inroads on Greek territories for looting and capture of prisoners began in the period of Asparouch (679-701) and continued till the reign of Michael (1246-1257). King Krum, when he captured Adrianoupolis in 813, took away all her inhabitants, as well as those of the surrounding areas, all amounting to 40,000, into Bulgarian territory to the North of the Danube. Another 50,000 prisoners together with other loot, were taken during the winter of the same year from Thrace (W. Slatarski, Geschichte der Bulgaren, I, Leipzig, 1918 p. 15, 29). According to the Bulgarian historian Ivan Sakazov (Bulgarische Wirtschaftsgeschichte, Berlin u. Leipzig, 1939, p. 57 foll.) Bulgaria was filled up with prisoners and cattle, which formed the Bulgarian national wealth and made their well-being possible. It was on this basis that the material civilization was formed, which Omortag, Krum's heir, bequeathed to his descendants. Later (1206), during a battle near the Tountza river, when the Bulgarian Ioannitzis or Skyloyiannis was totally defeated by the Greeks, 20,000 prisoners together with 3,000 carts were liberated, while they were led towards Bulgaria together with a great amount of loot. See Diog. Xanatalatos, OI 'Ellhnes kai oi Boûlgaroi eis tîn Makedonîan kai Thracîan. A' Athens 1944 pp. 17, 22 etc. 33, 39, 40 etc. Cp. K. Paparrigopoulos, Istoriq. 'Ell. 'Eðnouc 6th edition, tome 4, b, 186 and foll. t. 5, a 23. K. Amandos, 'Istoriq. toû Boûlgarîou Kράτους A' 1939 p. 411. B' 1947, pp. 5, 173, 426. OI βόλγριοι γείτονες τῆς 'Ελλάδος, 1923 p. 26 and 40. Ant. Keramopoulos OI 'Ellhnes kai oi βόλγριοι γείτονες, Athens 1945, p. 167 and foll. O. A. Megas, 'Αδριανούπολις ἡ πολυκατοικημένη in the periodical 'Ελληνική Δημοκρατία t. I 1948 pp. 93 and foll.

2) L. Niederle, op. cit. 112. C. Jirecek says that: "Even in the best years of the Middle Ages, during the reign of Tsar Symeon, according to the evidence given by Joannis Exarchos, there were to be seen but straw-covered huts in Bulgaria, except for the palace of the kings". Straw-covered huts in Bulgaria are also mentioned by Kantakouzinus, I, 144, edit. Bonn.

According to the Bulgarian historian I. Sakazov, op. cit. p. 41, "The very beginnings of an economic organisation in Bulgaria appeared in the court of the Tsars and with the aristocracy, who were trying to imitate the Byzan-

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But even later, after the 15th century, when Bulgaria, according

ing to Zlatev (p. 154) has enjoyed peace and quietness under the strong Turkish authority and when together with economic flourish the building art progressed, especially in the mountainous areas, even then the construction of houses, in Bulgaria and in the rest of Balkan countries was done by foreign, mainly Greek, builders from Western Macedonia and Epirus, the famous «Mastorochoria» (builder's villages)⁽¹⁾.

We can thus explain the great similarity between the Bulgarian rural, and later urban, house to the Greek house as regards arrangement of spaces external architecture and the methods of building. Consequently, the evolution presented by the Bulgarian house from its simplest original forms to the more composite ones, not only on the former Greek lands (Rodope, Eastern Roumelia, Plate XVI) but also in the districts over the Haimos mountains (Plate XIII-XV) it is the same as that of the Greek house.

Zlatev knows the builders of Western Macedonia when he says that it is they who introduced the beautiful arched capitals to Western Bulgaria, that sometimes hang freely at the prostoön of the houses. But Zlatev sees in these a mark of the «Italian Renaissance» which «the Macedonians transferred from the eastern shores of the Adriatic (!) to Western Bulgaria» (p. 155). This Italian Renaissance, according to the Bulgarian architect, «was also transplanted in the house building of Eastern Bulgaria, yet through another route, namely through Constantinople and Adrianople, and the Aegean coasts, where it took a Byzantine influence»! That is to say, Zlatev does recognize

time court in everything. There were many foreign prisoners in the Bulgarian capital who were specialists in various arts, as well as free Byzantine master-technicians, even during the periods when the relations of Bulgaria with Byzantium were peaceful. We can safely say that the first teachers of the Bulgarians on art, crafts and handicrafts were foreigners. Everything which the court or the aristocrats needed, was made by these artisans. The fact that Greek craftsmen were teachers of the Bulgarians in building churches and houses, and that Byzantium sent craftsmen, builders, painters etc. into Bulgaria, may be seen in I. Sakazov, op. cit. pp. 46, 59, 78.

1) On a total of twenty ancient tombs excavated in W. Macedonia by A. Keramopoulos, four contained, among other offerings, the tools of the dead (Minutes of Arch. Society, 1934. p. 77, 79, 80). It can be thus said that the craft of house-builder has been handed from father to son in that area for at least 2000 years. (See Ant. Keramopoulos, *Ti siva i Kouroßflaxoi* Athens 1939, p. 56). About Epirote craftsmen see Aug. Hadjimichail, *Ἡσποτική λαϊκή τέχνη*, *Ἡσποτική Χρονικά* Ε' 1930 p. foll and «La maison grecque» in *L'Hellénisme Contemporain*, Ser. II, 3 (1949) pp. 250 foll.